

Craving a workout amid COVID

It's not just Colorado's restaurants that have been on life support since the dawn of COVID-19. Gyms, health clubs and other workout facilities, shuttered at first during last spring's lockdown, have been operating at a fraction of their usual capacity for fear of spreading the virus. And that has left many of them on the ropes financially. It also has deprived Coloradans of a vital source of physical and emotional health and well-being, especially in colder weather.

The Colorado Fitness Coalition, a trade group representing commercial health clubs, estimates the industry's revenue, already halved going into last fall, dropped further after the latest round of restrictions were implemented amid a November spike in COVID cases. The coalition notes in a press release that Colorado could lose hundreds of gyms, thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in payroll and tax revenue due to the strict capacity limits.

Meanwhile, a new study commis-

sioned by the coalition has found workout facilities pose a very low risk of transmitting the virus. As reported in *The Gazette* last week, the study compared 32 weeks of gym admissions against COVID case rates in Colorado and found no correlation between spikes and gym attendance.

The coalition wants the restrictions on its industry relaxed, and we agree.

Not only has a vaccine at last arrived in Colorado, but there's also little evidence linking COVID transmission with a morning workout at the gym. As even a state health official contacted by *The Gazette* acknowledged, "If we look purely at the outbreak data for Colorado and other states, it does not appear that gyms are a major driver of virus transmission...Those data are also imperfect, but they do provide a sense of what types of facilities are at elevated risk."

Coloradans crave a good workout. Our state is perennially one of the fittest in the country. Let's keep it that way.

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